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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: June 04, 2009

Summary: Reports on the U.S. announcement of an "additional \$200 million aid for internally displaced persons" dominated headlines in all newspapers on Thursday. Ambassador Holbrooke's meeting with President Zardari and his joint press conference "expressing U.S. concern to Pakistan on internal refugees" received extensive coverage. In an exclusive story, the English daily, "The News," quoted Ambassador Holbrooke as saying that "the release of Hafiz Saeed 'had puzzled the Americans.'" Some major dailies ran official wire service (APP) story and attributed Ambassador Holbrooke as saying that the "U.S. would not let the Pakistanis down at this critical hour of their fight against militancy." Reports and photographs of President Obama's visit to Saudi Arabia and his meeting with King Abdullah also received extensive front-page coverage. Also, several newspapers reported that the "U.S. government accidentally posted on the internet a list of government and civilian nuclear facilities." The English daily "Dawn," reported that the "U.S. strongly criticized the decision to release Jammatud Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed."

The release of banned JD's chief Hafiz Saeed on a court order came under critical editorial comments. Surprisingly, most major Urdu newspapers refrained from editorializing this issue. The Lahore-based liberal English daily, "Daily Times," noted that "America and the West in general have simply recorded the event of his (Hafiz Saeed's) release but comment too will surely come by and by, which will be disadvantageous to Pakistan." The centrist national English daily "The News," exclaimed that "one can only wonder why it has proved so difficult to nab a man who is accused of heading organizations involved in multiple terrorist attacks." The prestigious English daily, "Dawn," opined that the "release of Hafiz Saeed raises many questions about the sincerity and efficacy of the state in quashing Jihadi networks that operate on its soil." Commenting on the subject, the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf," noted that "it seems that Pakistan government and judiciary have settled on to make their decisions despite all international pressure." End Summary.

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News Stories  
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"US To Give \$200m More For IDPs" "The News" (06/04)

"Special US envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke on Wednesday said the United States administration is seeking an additional \$200 million in emergency aid to help the internally displaced persons (IDPs) of Swat and Malakand. Addressing a joint

press conference with President Asif Ali Zardari and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Islamabad, the US envoy said that President Obama sent our team to Pakistan to show our concern to the people of Pakistan and to the world, our concern for the internal refugees which number in millions."

"Holbrooke Has A Full Blown Agenda TO Discuss" "The News" (06/04)

"Replying to a question about the release of Hafiz Saeed, Ambassador Holbrooke said it had puzzled the Americans. 'It is a matter of concern but before I speak on it, I would like to talk to officials in Islamabad to find out what led to this action. My experience in public life is that you don't achieve any objective by announcing on TV what you discuss in meetings in rooms,' he added."

"Obama Seeks Abdullah's Advice On Speech To Muslims" "The News" (06/04)

"President Barack Obama praised the United States' long strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia on Wednesday and said his visit was to seek King Abdullah's advice before making his much-heralded speech to the Islamic world in Cairo. 'I thought it was very important to come to the place where Islam began and to seek his majesty's counsel and discuss with him many of the issues that we confront here in the Middle East,' Obama told reporters as he met with the king at a farm near Riyadh."

"Americans See Muslims At War With US" "Daily Times" (06/04)

"As President Barack Obama departed for a trip to the Middle East on Wednesday, a fresh poll suggests that only one in five Americans has a favorable view of Muslim countries. That compares with 46 percent of the people questioned in a CNN/Opinion Research Corp survey who say they have an unfavorable opinion of Muslim countries. That's up five percent from 2002."

"U.S. Govt Posts Sensitive Material On Internet By Mistake" "Dawn" (06/04)

"The government accidentally posted on the Internet a list of government and civilian nuclear facilities and their activities in the United States, but US officials said on Wednesday the posting included no information that compromised national security. The 266-page document was published on May 6 as a transmission from President Barack Obama to Congress."

"JD Chief's Release Angers U.S." "Dawn" (06/04)

"The United States on Wednesday strongly criticized the decision to release Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed. On Tuesday, the Lahore High Court ordered his release, causing immediate rebukes from major world capitals."

"Dawa Chief's Release To Be Challenged: Punjab Govt" "Dawn" (06/04)

"The Punjab government has decided to file an appeal against the Lahore High Court verdict ordering the release of Jamaatud Dawa chief Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, home department officials said on Wednesday. They said the government counsel had been asked to file the appeal in a day or two."

"U.S. Mily Advisor Terms Pakistan 'Lost Cause'" "The Nation" (06/04)

"A top U.S. military advisor has said that Pakistan is a 'lost cause' and without wholesale change the country risks spiraling into lawlessness. David Kilcullen helped engineer the surge strategy that resulted in a record drop in violence in Iraq."

"Kerry Seeks Quick Action To Help IDPs" "Dawn" (06/04)

"Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry urged the US and Pakistani administrations on Wednesday to respond immediately to the deteriorating humanitarian situation among Pakistanis displaced by fighting in the Swat valley. 'The humanitarian crisis in Swat gets worse every day, which is why it's so critical that the government of Pakistan and the Obama administration undertake

immediate joint relief operations modeled on our successful efforts following the 2005 Kashmir earthquake,' said the senator in a statement issued by his office."

"Govt Told To Work For Early Return Of Dr. Aafia" "Dawn" (06/04)

"The Islamabad High Court asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday to work for possible step for early repatriation of Dr Aafia Siddiqui and disposed of a petition on the matter. Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan also asked Pakistan embassy in Washington to remain in contact with US officials to bring Dr Aafia back."

"Army To Stay In Swat For A Year" "Daily Times" (06/04)

"The military offensive to expel the Taliban from Swat could take another two months to complete, and troops may have to stay for a year to prevent the Taliban from retaking control, commanders said on Wednesday."

"Seven Qaeda Commanders Enter Pakistan" "Daily Times" (06/04)

"Seven trained commanders of Al Qaeda have reached Pakistan to create unrest across the country, with the terror outfit planning, in collaboration with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), to carry out attacks and target President Asif Ali Zardari and all four provincial chief ministers, Daily Times learnt on Wednesday."

"India Alleges Violation Of LOC Truce" "Dawn" (06/04)

"India has accused Pakistani troops of breaking the ceasefire along the Line of Control with light firing on Wednesday, and claimed it was the eighth such violation this year. The ceasefire was agreed in 2003."

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"India Keen On Normalizing Ties With Pakistan: Krishna" "The News" (06/04)

"India said on Wednesday it was looking to normalize relations with Islamabad through diplomatic channels and was closely monitoring developments in Pakistan, a day after angrily reacting to the release of a militant leader."

"Obama had planted the seeds of 'revenge and hatred,' Says Osama" "The News" (06/04)

"Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden said US President Barack Obama had planted the seeds of 'revenge and hatred' towards the United States in the Muslim world and warned Americans to prepare for the consequences. Bin Laden's remarks were aired on Wednesday by Al Jazeera television, one day after his deputy described Obama as a criminal and warned Muslims not to fall for his polished words."

"US Asked To Explain Legal Basis For Drone Attack Deaths" "Dawn" (06/04)

"A UN human rights expert on Wednesday called on the United States to disclose safeguards it has put in place to avoid civilian casualties during 'deeply troubling' air attacks by remote-controlled drones. 'Targeted killings carried out by drone attacks on the territory of other states are increasingly common and remain deeply troubling,' said Philip Alston, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings."

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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"L'affaire Hafiz Saeed," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

". . . Mr Saeed has said some right things after his release, such as that he is opposed to suicide-bombing. But his statement that the army has gone into Swat under international pressure places him outside the national consensus against the Taliban. America and the West in general have simply recorded the event of his release but comment too will surely come by and by, which will be disadvantageous to Pakistan. It will certainly be more critical than the comment made on the release of Maulana Abdul Aziz of Lal

Masjid."

"Walking To Freedom," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . One can only wonder why it has proved so difficult to nab a man who is accused of heading organizations involved in multiple terrorist attacks. The Lashkar-e-Taiba, founded by Saeed in 1985, was linked to terrorist attacks in India in 2003 and 2005. The outfit was banned in 2002 and re-emerged as the JuD. It is of course quite possible that Indian accusations against it are wholly inaccurate, but then we must ask why two governments in Pakistan acted to ban it. They must, we assume, have had some evidence at hand when they did so."

"Wanted: Better Laws," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

"The release of Hafiz Saeed raises many questions about the sincerity and efficacy of the state in quashing jihadi networks that operate on its soil. . . India is unhappy that Saeed and some of the others arrested in the aftermath of the attacks have been released. At the very least, their release sends a bad sign that the government here is perhaps not up to the task of prosecuting them even if evidence is adduced. The Pakistan government must urgently explain what it plans to do next, or else risk losing another opportunity for peace now that the elections have concluded in India."

"Ray of Hope," an editorial in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

"It seems that Pakistan government and judiciary have settled on to make their decisions despite all international pressure. The release of Hafiz Saeed by the Lahore High Court demonstrates that judiciary in Pakistan is pronouncing judgments independently. This is the moment that Pakistani nation has been waiting for the last 62 years."

"Hafiz Saeed's Release And Indian Reservations," an editorial in Lahore-based populist Urdu daily "Waqt" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

"The United Nations had sealed Hafiz Saeed's assets and put a ban on his travel yet the government went two steps beyond that and detained him - a step based on ill-intent... Religious, political and social circles are saying that Hafiz Saeed's release is a judicial decision that will not affect any country's interests. In this perspective, Indian reservations on the release are baseless and it is hurling allegations on the Jamaatud Dawa chief of having links with several terrorist outfits.... The Pakistani government must continue its operation against terrorism until the last miscreant is eliminated. However, there should be a distinction between terrorists and peaceful, patriotic individuals and organizations."

"Pakistan And America," an op-ed by Brian Cloughley in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

". . . Pakistan and America have different problems concerning terrorism. And one of the greatest problems is the arrogant presumption by Washington that Islamabad must do as it is told."

"Indian Mischief: Talk Firmly With Holbrooke," an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

"Pakistan is fighting the war against terrorism initiated by America with Pakistani military and people giving sacrifices. Pakistan leadership should not be apologetic while holding talks with American representatives. American diplomats should be told about the mischief India is committing from the Afghan soil. America should be asked to stop India from the mischief.... This is worth noting that bodies of Indian nationals have been found among the bodies of those killed by security forces in Malakand, Swat and adjoining areas."

"Obama's Crucial Mideast Trip," an op-ed by Muhammad Ali Siddiqi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily

"Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . It is against such a background that President Barack Obama finds himself in the Middle East. He is scheduled to make his historic broadcast to "reach out" to the Muslim world today, and there is no doubt that a great deal of how the Arab-Islamic world will judge him depends upon what he says about the Arab-Israeli conflict, the fate of the Palestinian refugees, Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, the emergence of a sovereign Palestinian state and the final status of Jerusalem."

"President Obama's Trip To The Middle East, And Expectations," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (cir. 10,000) (06/04)

"Israel and the U.S. are natural allies, yet the change in the leaders' tone at White House recently would have been unthinkable during George Bush's time. President Obama will have to take tough decisions if he is sincere about peace in the Mideast... Unconditional support for Israel has made U.S. the standard bearer of lies; President Obama needs to put words into action in order to change this identity."

"Some Washington Reflections," an op-ed by Tariq Fatemi in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . Obama should avoid addressing governments and speak directly to the Muslim people, confirming his commitment to democracy and stressing his resolve not to appease rulers of authoritarian regimes. While he should avoid getting into the intricacies of regional problems, he has to hold out hope that the US will promote resolution of those conflicts and confrontations that afflict the Muslim world, whether they be Palestine, Kashmir or Chechnya, because they are the sad legacy of the humiliating colonial era. Finally, he has to reject forcefully the current vicious portrayal of Muslims and dispel the false association of Islam with terrorism."

"War In Waziristan," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . Through their latest act of abduction, the militants have made it clear that we as a state have no option but to physically eliminate them. The fact that there seems to have been a realization of this at the GHQ and in government is to be welcomed. But it would be a mistake to believe the war can end in the north. The terrorists have rooted themselves in our cities; their presence can be perceived everywhere. There must therefore also be removed from these places and the centers they have established in Southern Punjab and other places closed down. Only then can we be assured our children are safe and that we do not need to live in daily dread of terrorists whisking them away, as happened to those returning home as they do each year for the summer break from Razmak."

"Window Of Opportunity," an op-ed by Farhat Taj in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . The people of Pakistan have two enemies--the Taliban and Talibanisation. To deal with the former is the job of our soldiers and policemen and to control the latter is the duty of the political parties, like the PPP, the ANP and even the PML-N. The soldiers and policemen are magnificently performing their job. They are giving up their lives every day to eliminate the Taliban evil. If the political parties did not perform their job, in the near future we will have the Taliban eliminated by our brave security forces, but the talibanization will loom large. I would request the leaderships of the PPP, ANP and PML-N to mobilize their grassroots-level workers to help the IDPs and do not leave the field open to the pro-Taliban religious parties and groups, who have by now mastered the "art" of exploiting human sufferings for the realization of their militant version of Islam."

"Ostrich Nation," an op-ed by Fasih Zaka in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (06/04)

". . . Despite the major issue of the refugees that we seem woefully unprepared for, there is one part of the dialogue that has not been

aggressively pursued. Like the US with Afghanistan and Iraq, we cannot cut and run. Whenever this army operation is over, life will not normalize. In fact if anything, it shall remain traumatized. The army may have to prepare to stay for a while in these areas in a civil-military dictatorship to ensure the complete flushing out of the Taliban and to resume all essential services. Otherwise this will be just a longer-run short-term solution if the operation is cut completely."

"Resolution Of Kashmir Dispute Is Pakistan's Priority," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (06/04)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has said that durable peace cannot be established in the region sans resolution of the Kashmir dispute.... Addressing meeting of the Kashmir Council, he regretted that India has stalled the dialogue process on the pretext of Mumbai attacks.... We should press for the just resolution of the Kashmir issue in keeping with the UN resolutions instead of stressing on the need for composite dialogue with India. Moreover, we should bring before the world media the evidence of Indian interference in our tribal areas and Swat."

"International Peace: Solving Kashmir And Palestine Disputes Is Inevitable," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (06/04)

"U.S. is the sole superpower of the world and all international institutions including the UN are tools in its hands. In this scenario, most of the responsibility for resolving international disputes lies with the U.S. As far as lip service is concerned, every U.S. President stresses on the importance of resolving [the Kashmir and Palestine] conflicts, but when the time comes for action, the fear of India and Israel stops them in their tracks... It would be a great gift for the world if President Obama succeeds in resolving the Kashmir and Palestine issues during his presidency. It is undeniable that resolving these disputes is a prerequisite for peace in the world."

Patterson